

From: John Repsold <jrepsold@mosaicspokane.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 7:52 PM
To: DES SBCC
Subject: Comment on Proposed Code Changes

External Email

Dear Washington State Building Code Council:

Words fail me to express how appalled and frustrated I am with your Council's proposed energy code changes that will make housing across the board in our state exponentially more expensive. In a state where **housing is already out of reach for 85% of Washingtonians**, I cannot fathom what would possess a council such as yours to suggest these changes. Does the Building Code Council really want to make private home ownership a thing of the past while at the same time driving up rental rates in a market that is already leading to unprecedented homelessness and housing insecurity? With nearly half of Washingtonians currently housing-cost burdened (i.e. paying more than 30% of their income to housing), how can you possibly be considering unproven, unnecessary and dramatically more expensive code changes?

For the past fifteen years I have worked in a non-profit in Spokane that daily deals with the urban poor of our city. I can tell you that **the housing crisis in our state is real**. I've never seen so many homeless and housing-insecure in Spokane. And the numbers continue to grow literally daily. Every week I try to help people who are being priced out of their apartments (thanks to state manipulation of evictions and rental rates over the past two years) or are already living on the streets. And just in case you weren't aware, **Spokane is currently experiencing a shortage of 32,000 housing units!** That's not individuals; that's UNITS, many of which house 2-4 people! Your proposed changes will make this current crisis a true disaster. What could possibly possess you to try and destroy home ownership and drive up rents in our state so quickly?

My wife and I sold our home in Spokane two years ago, intending to build our retirement home on a modest lot we had just purchased in the Spokane Valley. In the two years we have been trying to develop this lot we have encountered nothing but unanticipated delays, permitting hurdles, red-tape, skyrocketing inflation in cost-per-square foot for new construction, supply chain issues and now dramatically increased interest rates. Your proposed energy code changes will be the last straw. It will simply put housing in Washington beyond our reach.

I was raised in and have spent 53 or my 65 years in Washington State. But my wife and I can no longer afford to absorb endless cost increases for housing and energy. As much as we would like to stay in Spokane, it is already becoming clear that we may very well have to leave the state in order to afford our retirement

years. I am sure our situation is presently being multiplied tens of thousands of times over across Washington.

Your decisions have real consequences in real people's lives. While you may not feel the pain of these proposed changes anytime soon in your own lifestyles, know that you will be inflicting real (and I am beginning to assume intentional) hardship, suffering and destruction to hundreds of thousands of middle-class fellow citizens. Please come to your senses, show a little compassion for your neighbors and reject these destructive and confiscatory building code changes. Such draconian and damaging proposals could not come at a worse time for millions in our state.

Pleading for relief,

John S. Repsold